

American Headway 4 and Gender Representation

Questions: SO/06/02

Choose an EFL textbook and discuss the ways in which it represents men and women. Your discussion should focus upon linguistic representations, but it may also include consideration of non-linguistic features (e.g., visual representations of the sexes).

Word count: 4412 minus all: Section Headings, Long quotes, Figures and Appendices

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1. Introduction

Sociolinguistics is concerned with individual mental processes involved in speech production and comprehension and is a combination of an abstract system and a social construct. One aspect that has been examined in detail by linguists and sociolinguists is the different way men and women are reflected in text, and how this affects the learners who are reading or listening to it.

Simons states that the “interpretation (of text) depends on the information that is available within the text itself” (Simons and Murphy, 1986:192). This would include: spoken text (monologues, dialogues, interviews, group discussions), written text (emails, letters, autobiographies, biographies, descriptive passages etc.) and visuals (photographs, graphics and cartoons and their number and placement within the text) as well as any audiovisual materials that might accompany the text. Since “without exception all cultures recognize different roles for males and females” (Key, 1975:25), it is important for students to understand the language and social context they are studying in since by using North American texts, we are introducing, and possibly imposing, our cultural biases on them (Hirvela, 2004). Understanding gender roles is a key component of this issue.

1.1 Historical Perspective

The discourse of gender involves the construction of masculinity and femininity in polar opposites (Crawford, 1995), which often results in sexism, which is defined as

“the idea or belief the members of one sex are less intelligent or less capable than those of the other sex, and that certain jobs or activities are suitable for women and others are suitable for men” (Sinclair, 1987).

With the rise of feminism in the early 1970's, gender and language became a focus of linguists. Since then, decades have been spent exploring the topic and conducting studies which explored “the role language plays in the location and maintenance of women in a disadvantageous position in society” (Fasold, 1990:93). Robin Lakoff, who published her gender studies results in 1975, posited that women's use of overlaps, tag questions, intensifiers and quantifiers, standard grammar and lexical choices were exclusively negative and had the effect of “submerging a woman's personal identity” (Fasold, 1990:102). She also expressed the opinion that women were powerless in society and that their vocal patterns reflected this (Crawford, 1995).

More recently, linguists have stated that Lakoff's data was skewed and oversimplified because she had used her ‘intuition’ and personal experiences of how women used language rather than evaluating it objectively (Crawford, 1995). Much discussion has also ensued with regards to biology/physiology versus socialization. For example, biologically, women's vocal cords are smaller and thinner than men's, causing their voices to be higher pitched (Key, 1975); however, this does not account for their use of high inflection or high rising terminal, when the speaker's voice trails up at the end of statements, or for their choice of topics, lexis or grammar.

Since men and women “are socialized in different sociolinguistic subcultures” (Coates, 1988:69), women are commonly seen as the ‘nurturers of society’. Their lexical choices and tone of voice often reflect their ‘cooperative’ nature (Coates, 1988) (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2003) and much of their dialogue encompass the home. Men, conversely, are typically identified according to what they do in society; therefore, their conversation topics, lexical and semantic choices and style of talking reflect this (Kramarae, 1990).

Regardless of the order of events, i.e. gender leading to communication styles or communication styles being inherent to gender, the fact remains that “the way women and men speak ultimately affects their position in society, their economic and political achievements, and even their personalities and perceived identities” (Graddol and Swann, 1989:2). Men are seen as the “benchmark for all human beings” (Pauwels, 1988:33) and are the reference point “against which women’s speech is judged” (Wardhaugh, 1992:313).

Women are also omitted, misrepresented or represented unequally in texts. This can be seen through what Hartman and Judd, referred to as: firstness, occupation and omission, which relate to whether or not women are visible in text (pronouns, titles, visuals etc.) and given true and equal treatment (mentioned/seen equally and in realistic scenarios) (Hartman and Judd, 1986) (Pauwels, 1988).

1.2 Objectives of this Paper

The purpose of this paper is to evaluate how Liz and John Soars represent gender in American Headway 4, through language and visuals as well as sociolinguistic patterns, which are defined as having a “statistical regularity which connects linguistic to nonlinguistic variables” (Coates and Cameron, 1988:4). It is my goal to evaluate the data as an unbiased observer in so far as possible; therefore, the chapters chosen for in-depth analysis were chosen randomly (chapters 1, 2, 8, and 11). However, other data from the text may also be evaluated in order to provide further examples in some sections.

Lakoff’s original categories of: vocabulary, grammar, discourse and vocal patterns, will be explored, as well as Hartman and Judd’s categories of: firstness, occupation and omission in relation to male and female representation in this textbook.

2 Data and Data Collection

American Headway 4 was selected for analysis because it is current, in use at the school where I teach and is a series commonly used in EFL schools in Canada. I have been using other versions of this text for over thirteen years and was also curious to see how

the book had changed over the years. Although a workbook and resource book are available, only the student book was selected for this evaluation.

After listening to all of the tapes, reading the tape scripts and written texts, evaluating the images, and taking notes regarding my observations, I collated the data, created charts to compare it from and then evaluated the texts against the research available. The results are as follows.

3. Textbook Examination

3.1 Spoken Discourse

3.1.1 Overview

Discourse patterns vary according to age, gender, culture and social situation, to name but a few. When distinguishing between genders, there are a lot of variations to be discussed. Topics of conversation, number of words used, speech and vocal patterns as well as lexical and grammatical choices are all important when evaluating differences. The genre of the text is also essential as “knowledge of genre and communicative intentions form an important framework for the audience’s expectations and inferences” (Collins and Michaels, 1986:209).

It is also important to note that in language textbooks, the tape scripts are created by the authors and are contrived, rather than being authentic models. The people talking are actors and any emphasis or speech patterns they use will have been planned and rehearsed rather than spontaneous. This needs to be taken into account when evaluating the authenticity of what is represented. That being said, it is of interest to note that much of what has been created here is statistically realistic.

3.1.2 Topics of Conversation

According to studies, women generally talk about their feelings, affiliations, home and family (Myers, 2004) (Romaine, 1994) and men focus on cars, competition, sports, aggression and things that they do (Glass, 1992) (Wardhaugh, 1992). It is clear that the authors did their research as the discourse they created generally reflects this (figure 1).

(figure 1) in (American Headway 4, 2005, chapters 1, 2, 8, and 11)

Topics and <i>functional language</i>	Women alone or with other women	Men alone or with other men	Women and men together
Cars (traffic, driving etc.)		5	5
Entertaining	5	1	2
Family	9	4	1
Feelings	4	6	12
Food	1		
Health	2		3
House and home	6	2	1
News and information	2	4	1
Other	3	3	1
School	1		3
Shopping	1	1	
Sports		3	1
Travel	7	3	4
Weather	2		3
Work		3	7
<i>Advice</i>			3
<i>Complaints</i>	3	3	7
<i>Gossip</i>	1	3	5
17 different topics	14 different topics	13 different topics	15 different topics

In American Headway 4, home and family were discussed 60% more by women than by men. Men discussed sports and car-related topics, both when alone and with other people, whereas women only discussed them when they were with men. According to studies, this is because men's conversations center around things they do (Glass, 1992) (Myers, 2004). Men and women gossiped, complained and discussed their feelings more when they were together and while women were represented in a variety of job settings (figure 19), they did not discuss work unless they were in the company of men.

3.2 Topic Control

3.2.1 Overview

Conversations are controlled with: interruptions, silence, grammar, direct statements and topic changes etc. (Fasold, 1980). Because of this, men are generally believed to have more control in discourse, although women use more strategies, such as backchannelling, and using hedges, to ensure they are heard (Fisherman in Fasold, 1990) and (Lakoff in Crawford, 1995).

3.2.2 Number of Words Used when Speaking

One way men appear to control conversations is by providing basic, factual information (Coates and Cameron, 1988) while women generally use less abrupt verbal constructions (Key, 1975), which require elaborate codes and complicated syntax including modals, adjectives and indirect speech patterns (Wardhaugh, 1992). It has also been suggested that “women are less able to complete their turns at talk and tend to talk less” than men (Romaine, 1994:125). However this does not appear evident in the American Headway 4 text, as women use almost twice the number of words as their male counterparts (figure 2).

(figure 2) in (American Headway 4, 2005)

	Women ♀	Men ♂
1 Interview T2.8-2.10	One female interviewee : 217, 202, 318	One male interviewer : 91, 72, 144
	= 737 words	= 307 words
6 Monologues T1.9	Three women : 97, 99, 103	Three men: 85, 77, 93
	= 299 words	= 255 words
10 Conversations T1.5 (2 same gender interactions and 8 mixed gender conversations)	10 women : 7 , 7(one woman), 7, 17, 9, 5 , 15, 8 , 6, 7, 11 = 106 words * number in bold represent when women were asking questions	10 men : 10 , 7, 6, 8, 8 , 8 , 5, 5, 3 = 66 words * numbers in bold represent when men were answering questions
6 Conversations T11.2 (4 same gender interactions and 1 mixed gender conversation)	5 women : 37, 33/ 41, 26/ 29 = 166 words	5 men : 30, 17/ 28, 16/ 59 = 150 words
Results:	Total = 1308 words Women use 1.7x more words than men	Total = 778 words
nb: Discourse selections were chosen because some other aspect had already been evaluated and because they		

provided a cross section of the different types of discourse available in the textbook

While these figures do not correspond with linguists' data, it is important to note that in the majority of these speech situations, the male was asking the questions and the woman was responding, which generally requires more words; therefore, this is not exclusively a gender 'issue'.

3.3 Speaking Patterns

3.3.1 Overview

In American Headway 4, the speaking patterns of men and women appear to reflect what studies have shown. This is that men do the majority of interrupting and that women overlap, backchannel and add details in order to include the listener in the conversation (figure 3).

(figure 3) in (American Headway 4, 2005 chapters 1, 7, and 8)

Pattern	6 separate talks: 3 ♀ & 3 ♂ T1.9	Interview: older ♂ interviewer & younger ♀ interviewee T2.8-T2.10	Interview: younger ♂ interviewer and older ♀ interviewee T 7.7
interruptions	♀ ♂	♀ ♂ 2	♀ ♂ 5
overlaps	♀ ♂	♀ 5 ♂	♀ ♂
backchannelling, pauses and fillers (e.g um, uh, whatever, repetition)	♀ 3 ♂ 1	♀ 10 ♂ 5	♀ 10 ♂ 1
clarifying statements/questions (e.g. I mean, you mean?)	♀ 1 ♂ 1	♀ 5 ♂ 9	♀ ♂ 3
hedges & approximations (e.g., you know, stuff, I guess)	♀ 5 ♂ 6	♀ 16 ♂ 2	♀ 5 ♂
superfluous details	♀ 6 ♂ 4	♀ ♂	♀ 4 ♂
inappropriate additions (e.g personal commentsetc.)	♀ ♂	♀ ♂	♀ ♂ 13 (5 laughs, and 8 comments)
tags	♀ 1 ♂	♀ ♂	♀ ♂

3.3.2 Interruptions, Overlapping, Details and Backchannelling, Pauses and Fillers

Men show their dominance and demonstrate their independence by **interrupting** and/or **making categorical statements** (Coates, 1988) (Myers, 2004) (Woodall, 1990), whereas women overlap and use *backchannels, pauses and fillers* to demonstrate that they are being attentive and to allow an opportunity for the other person to indicate that they are interested in pursuing that topic (Coates, 1988) (Edelsky and Adam, 1990) (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2003). They also provide *extra details* in order to enhance connections and increase the level of intimacy (figure 4).

(figure 4) in (American Headway 4, 2005:134) T7.7

Section 1:

P: “For my sister, ***my elder sister*** he saw over one hundred men before.....” (providing details to help the listener ‘see’ the situation)

I: “**He saw how many? Goodness. It must take up a lot of time.**” (categorical statement)

P: (*uhhmmm*) “Yes, it can be difficult to decide but for me he saw only two *um...one in the morning and one in the afternoon* and *um* he chose the second one.” (demonstrating that she is listening)

Section 2:

I: “**What a day! Can you tell me about it?**” (categorical statement)

P: “Oh yes. My husband is planning them now. He’s been asking families for some time already and ...”

I: “**And your sons want it?**” (controlling the topic)

P: “Well, Krishna, ***he’s the eldest***, he’s OK about it – he’s studying hard and hasn’t got the time to meet girls but...” (creating intimacy and trying to draw the listener in)

I: “**Yes, what about the youngest? Ravi, isn’t it?**” (controlling the topic)

In T7.7, it is evident that the man and woman are communicating very differently; the woman using details and inclusive sounds to include the man and continue the dialogue and the man trying to get to the information he wants directly. The interviewer interrupted the woman five times to either change/control the topic or comment on something she had said. While this is typical of male speaking patterns (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2003), it is also common of the genre of interviews, since the speakers

do not know each other and make predictions of the other's responses. Therefore, the gender of these participants is likely not the sole reason for the vocal patterns identified.

The data in these three sample texts also indicates that the women did 77% of the backchannelling and hedging, which is a “supportive conversational strategy” (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2003:110) used by women and people meeting for the first time.

3.3.3 The Use of Questions

Questions are generally used to encourage further dialogue and retrieve information (Glass, 1992), and according to studies, is typical male behaviour. However, while women typically use questions to ‘seek clarification’, (Wardhaugh, 1992), this is also necessary for interviewers, regardless of gender (figure 5).

(figure 5) in (American Headway 4, 2005:129) T3.6

♂I: **“You saw these bits of dollar bills just blowing in the wind?”**

♀R: Yeah, it was, um like really bizarre. We were just walking to school and there's ripped-up notes flying all over the street. And then we followed it to, like, a garbage can, and that's where the big bag was full of them.”

♂I: **“How big a bag?”**

♀R: “Um...”

♂I: **“Like a garbage bag or something?”**

♀R: No actually not that big.

As seen above, **clarifying questions** were used by the interviewer to prompt further detail from the speaker. Although the interviewers in this textbook were exclusively male, this discourse strategy is typical of the genre therefore, they are expected to be used rather than providing proof that men ask more questions than women or are, necessarily, more direct than women (Collins and Michaels, 1986).

3.3.4 Use of Details, Hedges and Fillers

According to Woodall, women provide details because they “aid in establishing intimacy, a primary goal for women in conversation” (Woodall, 1990:40). In figure 6, the female speaker provides many **extra details** and uses ***hedges*** to ‘fill in the blanks’.

(figure 6) in (American Headway 4, 2005:127)

Gabriele:

“Short trips - ***you know, weekends away, whatever,*** - I don’t miss anything. But when I am away for longer, ***uh,*** what I miss are my two cats. **Mickey, that’s the older one, he’s always getting into trouble out in the yard, and C.J., he’s just a kitten, just a few months old. He does the most adorable things with a ball of string...well, anyway. What I do** when I have to leave them **is** I bring a photo of them with me. **That sounds silly, but I like to see them every once and awhile.**”

While details are not necessary to convey Gabriele’s main message, they provide that sense of intimacy that Woodall refers to and bring the reader closer to the text. Her use of ***hedges*** (e.g. you know, whatever etc.) and less abrupt constructs also prove that the speaker is not ‘editing’ herself, which further provides the impression of intimacy (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2003) rather than demonstrating tentativeness as Lakoff believed (Crawford, 1995).

3.4 Lexis and Grammar

3.4.1 Overview

Generally, men and women use different grammar and lexical choices to communicate. Women’s use of adjectives, quantifiers and intensifiers and indirect speech were once seen as diminishing features of female communication (Coates, 1988), whereas men’s use of direct, nonstandard grammar was considered masculine (Coates and Cameron,

1988). In actual fact, “any social group, whether it be a culture, subculture or family, develops communicative patterns that enable group members to cooperate and co-exist with one another” (Haslett, 1990:327). Unfortunately, women’s communicative style has often been interpreted as being less than men’s (Graddol and Swann, 1989).

3.4.2 Women’s Grammatical Choices

Women typically select language that is “aimed at preventing hurt feelings” (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2003:188); however, this indirect, over-polite style can lead listeners to believe that they are apologetic or defensive, thus weakening their status (Woodall, 1990). They also “send out and look for signs of agreement and link what they say to the speech of others” (Romaine, 1994:124). In the monologues and same-gender dialogues in the text, women used more *adjectives*, *intensifiers*, **modals** and **formal, polite language** and provided more details than the men (figure 7).

(figure 7) in (American Headway 4, 2003:138, T11.2)

(Two women discussing a party and studying)

1A. No, I **can’t possibly** go out tonight. I **shouldn’t have gone** out *last* night.

B. Come on – we had a *great* time. It was a **wild** party.

A. I know it was.

B. So, when’s your exam?

A. Tomorrow, 9 o’clock. **If only I hadn’t left** *all* my studying to the *last* minute.

B. I wouldn’t **worry if I were you.** You know you *always* do ok.

A. There’s *always* a first time.

B. **Good luck** anyway.

According to research, and from the example above, it is obvious that women communicate in this way to open up the conversation (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2003). Their use of whole language is thought to be a reflection of what they hear in society and is meant to be considerate, polite, face-saving and inclusive (Milroy, 1987) (Deucher, 1988) as well as a way of “gaining status through their speech patterns” (Coates and Cameron, 1988:17).

(figure 8) in (American Headway 4, 2005:131) T1.7

- | |
|--|
| A. I'm going away for two weeks. Do you think you could possibly water my houseplants for me?
B. No problem. I'd be glad to. |
|--|

In the figure above, with the use of indirect, polite language, the speaker provides a face-saving out for her friend as she asks for a favour.

3.4.3 Women's Lexical Choices

Key (1975) stated that men and women also differentiate in how they select lexis and Deucher suggested that women choose more colourful, specific adjectives, *intensifiers* and *quantifiers* and use **repetition** as a form of enhancer to ensure their words are noticed (Deucher, 1988) (figure 9).

(figure 9) in (American Headway 4, 2003:136) T8.7

"It was very, very cold". ..." all the clothes that I had, all the scarves and the sweaters...." "... little balls of ice..." "and it was very, very quiet..." "...and I was feeling so, so cold..." "...and I was beginning to really, seriously panic...."
--

While Lakoff thought that these forms made women sound unassertive and lacking in authority, (Cameron, McAlinden and O'Leary, 1988), they actually provide cues needed for causal relationships and demonstrate respect for the listener by providing enough details to ensure their understanding, as can be seen in the figure below (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2003).

(figure 10) in (American Headway 4, 2003:136) T1.7

B. "I didn't know you had moved."

A. “Yeah, two weeks ago. It’s ***much bigger*** than the old one. **Huge** kitchen and three **big** bedrooms.”

B. “*Sounds great.*”

A. “Yeah. The problem is, with the place being ***much bigger***, there’s ***much more*** housework to do!”

B. “*That’s a pain!*””

3.4.4 Men’s Language Choices

Typically, men use restricted codes (short, simple grammar etc.) and ***nonstandard English*** (Coates and Cameron, 1988). They are not generally concerned about linking their conversations or receiving responses, as can be seen with the two separate questions that are posed in the figure below. This is seen as a sign of men’s independence (Coates and Cameron, 1988) (Romaine, 1994) and ‘masculinity’ (Key, 1975).

(figure 11) in (American Headway 4, 2005:138, T11.2)

(Two men discussing cars)

3A. ***Oh man! What would you give*** to drive one of those?

B. Which one would you choose if you had the money?

A. That’s a big ‘if’...But...mm...***if I won the lottery, I’d buy*** the Aston Martin.

B. I wouldn’t – I’d go for the Ferrari.

A. ***In your dreams!***

Rather than saying ‘*I wouldn’t buy the Aston Martin. I would go for the Ferrari instead*’, the male speaker reduces the number of words he uses to, ‘I’d go for the Ferrari’. This form carries prestige and is seen as socio-economically more powerful (Coates and Cameron, 1988) (Romaine, 1994) unlike the standard speech patterns used by women (Key, 1975).

3.4.5 Pronouns and Diminutives Used to Refer to Women

Another area of lexis that keeps women at a disadvantage is the lack of use of pronouns and the use of diminutive word endings (Adriaen and King, 1991). Diminutive suffix endings, *ess* or *ette*, were not found in these chapters, and in the texts evaluated, ‘she’ and ‘he’ were each used seven times, whereas ‘they’ was used for plural groups of people. This is a positive linguistic step as “gendered pronouns make it difficult indeed to talk about anyone other than oneself without presupposing a gender attribution” (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2003:254).

3.4.6 Mild Expletives and Tag Questions

Other features of ‘feminine’ language that Lakoff and others have addressed are mild expletives and tag questions. With the exception of the term ‘goodness’ use by the male interviewer in T2.8 and ‘Oh wow’, also used by a male, expletives were not evident in the text, nor were they expected to be, given that it is a student textbook to be used by young adults and adults. Tag questions were also not present but, since this is an upper intermediate level text, they were probably addressed in American Headway 2 and 3.

3.5 Vocal Patterns

3.5.1 Overview

Men and women use their voices in different ways for different purposes. For example, we all use intonation and high inflection when making requests, showing disbelief and expressing excitement but we use it to different degrees, as seen in figure 12.

(figure 12) in (American Headway 4, 2005 chapters 1, 2, 8, and 11)

Pattern	Woman alone	Women together	Women and men together	Men alone	Men together
‘Up-talk’/HRT	9	3			
High inflection	9			1	
Effeminate male voice				7	1
Normal pitch	3			7	
Monotone					

3.5.2 High Inflection

High inflection, ‘colourful’, or stressed voice patterns, is used with indirect, polite forms of requests, as well as invitations and offers, whereas normal or lower pitch is used for more direct statements and questions. High inflection, like indirect speech, is generally seen as a sign of insecurity and tentativeness and is linked to femaleness and emotions (Coates, 1988) (Swann, 1988). However, they are also seen to have greater emotional expressiveness, seen in figure 13.

(figure 13) in (American Headway 4, 2005:131) T4.10

1. ♂ **'I'm sorry to bother you, but could you possibly change a ten-dollar bill?'**
♀ **'Do you have change for a ten-dollar bill?'**

2. ♀ **'Where's the station?'**
♀ **'Could you tell me where the station is, please?'**

In the case above, polite, indirect syntax, and high inflection were used, by both men and women, to ask for assistance. This situation could instill insecurity in some; however, the example is more likely a representation of the politeness we use with strangers.

3.5.3 High Rising Terminal (HRT) or ('uptalk')

High rising terminal (HRT or 'uptalk') is considered to be sociable, non-final and inclusive of others although they have long believed to have represented insecurity and powerlessness (Graddol and Swann, 1989) (Cameron, McAlinden and O'Leary, 1988).

There are twelve instances of HRT being used in the four chapters evaluated, all used by women. In the example below, the women are asking favours of each other, not strangers. For example:

(figure 14) in (American Headway 4, 2005:126) in T1.7

1A. I'm going away for two weeks. Do you think you could possibly water my houseplants for me?

B. No problem. I'd be glad to. **I'll keep an eye on your whole house if you like.**

A. That would be great. You're sure it's not too much work for you?

B. Don't worry. I'll make sure everything stays clean and tidy. I don't mind doing housework. In fact, I sort of like it!

nb. HRT is represented by (↗) and high inflection is represented with (°)

Other instances of HRT in this text are when young women are talking about things they are excited by or when they are providing extra details (figure 15).

(figure 15) in (American Headway 4, 2005:128) T2.4

We got up at five o'clock in the morning. We went to the site and set off. Because you're floating **with the wind**, there is no breeze on you, and really was like flying like a bird. You could look down on everyone, and they were also small, **like ants**. It was just amazing, and so silent. And we landed **about seven o'clock**, and suddenly we

'Uptalk' used here ensured that the woman's description of her dream was given more attention than the three others, because it was dynamic (Glass, 1992).

3.5.4 Effeminate Male Voice and Intonation

Although most would agree that it is more interesting to listen to 'lively' voices rather than those spoken in monotone, we still speak, and hear, according to "gendered expectations" (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2003) and since dynamism and use of voice accenting are considered female qualities, male voices that are "lively and engaged" are seen as non-heterosexual (Tom Delph-Januiurek, 1999 in Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2003:178). The majority of texts where male voices fit this description were when a male was complaining to a female (T1.8, T1.13, T2.6) and once when an actor was receiving an award (T8.12) (figure 16).

(figure 16) in (American Headway 4, 2005:136)

“I am ***absolutely grateful*** and ***delighted*** to receive this award. I’m ***truly grateful*** to *all* those ***wonderful*** people who voted for me. Red Hot in the Snow was an ***absolutely fantastic*** movie to act in, *not only* because of *all* the ***totally brilliant*** and ***talented*** people involved in the making of it, but also because of the ***fabulous, thrilling*** and ***often extremely dangerous*** locations in Alaska. etc.)

This speaker was also considered effeminate because of the use of “variation in fundamental frequency” in his voice (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2003:177) and his use of **adjectives**, *quantifiers*, *intensifiers* and *emphatic words* (Cameron, McAlinden and O’Leary, 1988) (Key, 1975).

This gender stereotyping, while likely not deliberate on either the part of the writers or the actors, perpetuates the stereotype that “dynamism is often called on for assuming a feminine position” (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2003:177) and creates an undeserved bias. It is also important to note that the patterns provided in this evaluation were created by actors who are reading scripts, not authentic speakers and may therefore provide a bias which is not be present in natural environments.

3.6 Written Text

3.6.1 Overview

Written text includes words as well as the visuals included and their number, placement and treatment also need to be evaluated when determining whether the book treats both genders equally.

People must use their “discourse experience to develop context-free strategies for reducing the number of confusing options” (Cook-Gumpres, 1986:12) when reading. One of these ‘confusing options’ could be the lack of adequate female representation in reading texts. For example, as can be seen in figure 17, women are barely represented in American Headway 4 at all, which is clearly de-motivating for female readers.

(figure 17) in (American Headway 4, 2005)

Txt	Women	Men	Other
Chapter 1	1. Woman's email to a male friend	1. Boy's letter to parents 2. Man's ex-pat story 3. Boy's ex-pat story	1. Story about tourism, written by a man
Chapter 2		4. Biography male explorer 5. Biography of male backpacker	
Chapter 8		6. Story of a male actor 7. Story of town and its male mayor 8. Acceptance speech by male actor	
Chapter 11		9. Story about a man and the lottery	2 series of 6 short stories
Total:	1	9	7

There are sixteen reading texts presented in the four chapters evaluated; however, only one is written about, or by, a woman, while nine are about men and seven others about miscellaneous things. It is unclear why the authors chose to do this, but this pattern is reflected in the entire textbook (see Appendix 2) with only nine of the forty four readings representing women. Since language students often learn about culture through the oral and written materials provided in textbooks, this inequality creates a double standard which “augment(s) hierarchical comparisons among people” (Kramarae, 1990:350) setting a negative precedent. If one were to examine only the written components of this textbook, there would be an “androcentric” or “masculine-generic perspective” (Pauwels, 1988:22), rendering women virtually invisible, and providing a biased view of North American culture.

3.6.2 Hartman and Judd's Categories: Firstness, Occupation and Omission

3.6.2.1 Firstness (with Reference to Male/Female Interaction only)

Men are usually mentioned first, or solely, in spoken and written discourse (Hartman and Judd, 1986). This can be seen in how men, women and humanity as a whole are referred to (e.g. Mr. and Mrs., mankind, or 'he' to refer to all singular subjects). It also refers to how often this occurs (figure 18).

(figure 18) in (American Headway 4, 2005, chapters 1, 2, 8, and 11)

Women mentioned first in text	Men mentioned first in text
29 = 37%	50 = 63%

In the four chapters evaluated, men were mentioned first 26% more often than women.

This was found both in written text, for example, ‘Tony and Maureen Wheeler’ and spoken text based on who was interviewed first (Soars and Soars, 2005).

3.6.2.2 Occupational Roles

Language use is highly variable and is based on a number of factors: social and psycholinguistic (Ellis and Barkhuizen, 2005). Within those parameters, we have expectations of what roles people will play. According to Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, “traditional women’s jobs are in the service sector and often involve nurturing, service and support roles” (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2003:30) (figure 19).

(figure 19) in (American Headway 4, 2005, chapters 1, 2, 8, and 11)

Women 21 total = 45.5%			Men 25 total = 54.5%		
Spoken text	Written text	Pictures	Spoken text	Written text	Pictures
Traditionally well-paid professions/positions					
<i>manager</i>	= 4.5%		CEO	= 26%	businessman
			doctor	millionaire	
			vet	governor	
<i>scientist</i>			athlete	doctor	
					soccer coach
					soccer player
					pilot
				army officer	
‘Helping professions’					
	= 4.5%			= 0%	
		<i>police officer</i>			
		<i>teacher</i>			
The ‘arts’					
	= 7.5%			= 7.5%	
<i>writer</i>	<i>writer</i>			news editor	
<i>actress</i>			actor	writer	
Less prestigious/well-paid jobs					
<i>insurance-agent</i>	= 8.5%			=11%	
				consultant	
<i>IT service-provider</i>				IT technician	
<i>clerk</i>			clerk		
<i>bank teller</i>			waiter		
			recycler		
Unpaid work or other					
<i>homemaker</i>	=17.5%	<i>motherx2</i>		= 12.5%	
<i>caregiverx2</i>		<i>student</i>			

<i>traveler</i>	backpacker explorer	backpacker explorer	backpacker
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Of the 15% of helping professions represented, all are represented by women, with another 17.5% representing unpaid work, in comparison to men's 12.5%. At the other end of the scale were the higher paid, more prestigious and powerful job represented by 26% of men compared to 4.5% of the women. While Romaine thought this was because "men gravitate disproportionately to jobs that enhance inequalities" (Romaine, 1994:123), this type of textual representation in textbooks perpetuates the stereotype rather than representing North American beliefs about gender equality accurately (Ehlich and King, 1991).

3.6.2.3 Omission - Terms of Reference

Another area that differentiates women and men is how they are referred to. The structure of our society is mirrored by our lexicon and language use and has an affect on how we interact with each other and how much power we may or may not have (Graddol and Swann, 1989). This is reflected in terms of address, which further reflect our roles in society and individual relationships between speakers (Ehlich, 1991) (figure 20).

(figure 20) in ([American Headway 4](#), 2005 chapters 1, 2, 8, and 11)

Women	Men	Women and Men
Girlfriend 3		Best friend 1
Ex-girlfriend 1		
Woman 2	Man 2	
First name 12	First name 12	
Full name 3	Full name 12	Tony and Maureen Wheeler 2
Mom 1	Dad 2	
	Father 1	
Wife 4	Husband 1	
Daughter 1	Son 1	Kids 1
	Grandfather 1	
Sister 1	Brother 3	
Old lady 2		
She 7	He 7	They 3
	His 1	
	Him 1	
	Boy 1	
= 37	= 45	= 6

(nb. *Terms only counted one time in each text)

In the figure above, it is evident that men are given more respect or social power in the textbook according to how they are addressed. In these chapters, women were only referred to by full names three times, as opposed to men's twelve, indicating a higher form of respect for the males. Females were referred to twice by mentioning age derogatorily, 'old lady', and in texts about the founders of the Lonely Planet travel series, the couple was referred to as one unit, 'Tony and Maureen Wheeler', with the male name first. Casual, first names were used equally for both genders.

3.6.2.4 Omission – Visuals

Clearly, "words do matter" (Eckhardt and McConnell-Ginet, 2003), but so too do pictures which "have an impact beyond the surface message they convey" (Lavender and Vanstone, 1991:56). Their number, placement, treatment and content all carry importance.

In the past, women's pictures were often relegated to lesser positions on the page, many texts represented them solely in the home or in menial jobs and there were fewer pictures of women than men in texts. For example, in Headway Upper Intermediate (1986), the numbers were: 20.8% women versus 41.8% men. However, in American Headway 4, males and females are represented equally at 33.4% (figure 21).

3.6.2.4.1 Number of Visuals

Linguists, Lavender and Vanstone, stated "the first step in identifying the degree of gender bias in images is to analyse the number and treatment of the image" (Lavender and Vanstone, 1991:58).

(figure 21) (Adapted from Lavender and Vanstone, 1990) in (American Headway 4, 2005, chapters 1, 2, 8, and 11)

Total number of images #	Number of images of women (individual or groups)♀	% of total	Number of images of men (individual or groups)♂	% of total	Number of images of women and men together♀♂	% of total	Number of other images	% of total
53 100%	13♀	24% ♀	12♂	23%♂	18♀♂	34% ♀♂	10 other	29% other

nb:* A series of pictures was counted as one if it contained the same figure repeated (3)

It is clear from the figure above that this text treats men and women equally in number. However, this is not the case in their placement on the page or their treatment.

3.6.2.4.2 Placement of Visuals

While the number of pictures for men and women is the same, men are seen in more prominent positions 6% more often than women. This is in part because the majority of written texts feature men, further demonstration of the inequality in the writing component of the text.

(figure 22)

(Adapted from (Barnes, 1984:46) in Lavender and Vanstone, 1991) in (*American Headway 4*, 2005, chapters 1, 2, 8, and 11)

Total number of images	Number of images of women	% of total	Number of images of men	% of total	Number of images of women and men together	% of total	Number of other images	% of total
	♀		♂		♀♂			
Feature treatment (e.g., large picture, top or outside edge of text)	5	9%	8	15%	6	11%	7	13%
Non-Feature treatment (e.g., small picture, bottom of page, inside edge)	8	15%	4	8%	12	23%	3	6%
Total								
53	13♀	24%♀	12♂	23%♂	18♀♂	34%♀♂	10 other	29% other

3.6.2.4.3 Treatment of Visuals

The third area of importance when evaluating visuals is ‘treatment’ or what the pictures show about how people are ‘seen’ in society (Barnes, 1984 in Lavender and Vanstone, 1991). Barnes evaluated pictures and categorized them into five separate levels, with level five being the ultimate goal since “diversity is one of the hallmarks of presenting women as complete human beings” (Lavender and Vanstone, 1991:58).

3.6.2.4.4 Comparison of Treatment

(figure 23) (Adapted from (Barnes, 1984:46) in Lavender and Vanstone, 1991)

Level 1: 2 dimensional; (cameos; non-contextualised pictures)				
Level 2: women in the home or womanly occupations; stereotyped; traditional				
Level 3: women may be professional but first place is the home; generally inferior to men				
Level 4: women and men are equal				
Level 5: women and men are individuals				
Level	% of total images of women ♀		% of total images of men ♂	
1	7.5%	1	23%	3
2	38.5%	5	8%	1
3	7.5%	1	46% <i>*seen as the norm</i>	6
4	7.5%	1	8%	1
5	38.5%	5	15%	2
Total	100%	13♀	100%	13♂
Examples of Women in <u>American Headway 4</u>:				
Level 1 = Women in bikinis on the beach without any male bathers present				
Level 2 = 2 women as mothers with babies in their arms				
Level 3 = Women as teachers				
Level 4 = A young woman as dreaming in the grass beside her male companion				
Level 5 = An elderly woman driving away on a motorcycle				
Examples of Men in <u>American Headway 4</u>:				
Level 1 = A solitary man's face out of context				
Level 2 = Men fighting or drinking				
Level 3 = 2 male soccer coaches and 2 boys looking at cars				
Level 4 = A young man seen dreaming in the grass beside his female companion				
Level 5 = Male actor kissing statue				

As is evident from the figures above, the number of women represented in one-dimensional, derogatory or stereotypical pictures was 46% but men were only represented in this way 31%. In part, this is because men are held as the norm (Pauwels, 1988); therefore, pictures representing them in 'typical' pictures, for example, 'in an office', were categorized as level 3. In this level, men are represented 46% of the time to women's 7%. There was, however, more equality between the sexes when evaluating the entire textbook (Appendix 1).

4 Conclusion

Ehlich and King state that, “in Canada, nonsexist language is widely regarded as an essential component” in achieving equity (Ehlich and King, 1991:74). So too should it be said for the language learning classroom. Since “the media and the education system are undoubtedly in a strong position to influence society” (Graddol and Swann, 1989:133) and “language affects its speakers’ perceptions of the world” (Graddol and Swann, 1989:134), it is important to ensure that women and men are represented equally and fairly, in spoken and written text as well as with visuals, especially as learners bring different learning styles and cultural experiences with them and will interpret information differently (Gumperz, 1986) (Oxford, 1990).

Since “the gender balance in formal institutions has a profound affect” on both official and unofficial discourse (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2003:93), a few modifications or additions should be considered for this textbook if the authors write a fourth edition to this classroom text.

With regards to spoken discourse, authenticity is important when preparing a text for students to use as a language model and finding or creating models that represent the genders fairly is also essential. American Headway 4 represents men and women equally in many areas. However, while many of the speaking patterns represented in the textbook are statistically accurate, both according to linguistic studies and as a reflection of what I have observed in my community and workplace, it still does not truly reflect our topics of conversation or speech patterns. Instead, the authors should provide examples of men and women discussing relevant and current issues using authentic voice patterns.

Featuring women and effeminate male speakers mainly in negative situations (e.g. complaining) or stereotypical occupations (e.g. low paid or weak status) also provides a negative image for language learners. Ensuring their voice patterns reflect societal reality

rather than focusing on whether or not three men and three women are represented in each listening task should be ensured.

More reading texts representing women and girls in equal number to men are also required to ensure female readers are motivated and have an accurate view of North American life. This would then be reflected in the visuals as well.

Were these few alterations made, this textbook, or at least the chapters evaluated, would be a perfect example of gender balance and a fine example to use with upper intermediate language learners.

Appendix 1: Tape Scripts

Total number of tape scripts included in American Headway 4, (2005)

134 Tape scripts


One person talking		Two people talking			One or two people talking
Story	Series of individuals	Interview	Question/Response	Conversation	Pronunciation work and basic repetition/feedback tasks
15	23	5	3	44	40

nb.* In most texts where two people are speaking, both genders were usually used consecutively, perhaps because it is easier for students to differentiate between the voices

Appendix 2: Intonation and Voice Patterns

Intonation and Voice Patterns included in American Headway 4, (2005)

	'normal'	Monotone/ Little inflection	Lots of inflection	Up talk/HRT	High voice or effeminate
♀		5*note higher voice when	3	24	5

	5	<i>being polite</i> 3	1 1	2	4
	2		6♀ 2♂ storytelling		1 7♂ 2♀ generally complaining or gossiping when the male voice is high; female patters followed with lots of adverbs

nb.* Each number represents one entire dialogue and not how many times the person used a particular voice pattern within that dialogue

Appendix 3: Written Texts

Total number of written text included in American Headway 4, (2005)

Gender in text	Female alone ♀	Male alone ♂	Female and male ♀♂	Female/ Female ♀♀	Male/ Male ♂♂	Other
# of reading texts in main part of the text	4: Princess Diana, Margaret Atwood, Mary Hobson, woman barred from shopping	11: Marco Polo, S. Stallone, JFK, male traveler, boy living in Korea, boy at camp, John Travolta, retired boat builder, James Oliver(chef), unidentified singer, man	3: 2 families, 1 couple			15: ads, cover letters, companies(2), histories, reviews, news, general interest stories etc.
# of readings at the back of the text	5: Kate Henderson's resume and letter of application, Marilyn Monroe, letter to a friend, letter	6: background on Tony Wheeler, news article on man with a tiger, Otzi the iceman, letter to a friend, story	2: climbing expedition, email			7: 2 text reviews, news story, interpretation of dreams, background on organic company, opinion email, city review



to a host
mother

about how
cheap a man
is, Larry the
truck driver,
Michelangelo

Appendix 4: Visuals

Total number of visuals included in American Headway 4, (2005)

(Adapted from Lavender and Vanstone, 1990)

nb.* a series of pictures was counted as one if it contained the same figure repeated (3)

Total number of images #	Number of women	% of total	Number of men	% of total	Women and men together	% of total	Images of other	% of total
191 100%	64 ♀	33.4%	64 ♂	33.4%	36 ♀♂	18.7%	27 other	13.6%

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